

Eastside Cemeteries Historic District

General boundaries: Elmwood Avenue, Mt. Elliot, Lafayette Avenue, and Waterloo.

Local
State
State Marker
National ✓ 12/2/82



Lewis Cass gravesite
Photo courtesy of findagrave.com

Historic overview:

The American cemetery was one of the earliest forms of the romantic landscape, influenced by natural gardening styles, circuitous paths, open spaces, and a chapel. The design of Elmwood was patterned after Mt. Auburn Cemetery in Massachusetts, which was created in 1831, formerly an arboretum. The rural planting traditions of Mt. Auburn were duplicated and preserved in the mid to late nineteenth century American cemeteries.

By 1846, a number of Detroit residents conceived of establishing a cemetery in the suburbs of Detroit. They began with 42 acres of the Hunt farm. The cemetery contains the memorials of many prominent men and women, such as: Michigan veterans since the British and Indian Wars, some of Detroit's black citizens who played major roles in the early struggle for freedom from slavery, and political leaders. There is also a lot dedicated to those soldiers who fought in the Civil War. Additionally, the trustees of Elmwood have preserved the last vestiges of what was originally Parent's Creek. This creek was renamed Bloody Run after the Indian massacre of Captain Dalzell and his men on July 31, 1763.

There are many outstanding mausoleums and monuments, such as the graceful marble "Veiled Lady" by Randolph Rogers, and "Flying Geese" by Marshall Fredericks. In 1855, a Chapel was made of quarried limestone, but fell into disuse when local undertakers began providing their own chapels. Restoration work began in the 1950s, and the chapel is again being used for services.